

## Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 OMB-01 SAJ-01

/065 W

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R 080555Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5656

DIA WASHDC

INFO CINCEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

CINCUSNAVEUR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 1395

EO 11652: M

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, PINR

SUBJECT: SOVIET SHIP VISIT TO HODEIDA

1. THE VISIT OF RADM TJ BIGLEY, COMIDEASTFOR, TO SANA DURING THE PERIOD 6-8 JUNE 1975 PROVIDED THE SOVIETS IN YAR OPPORTUNITY TO ONCE AGAIN OVERPLAY THEIR HAND IN AN ATTEMPT TO OUTMANEUVER THE US NAVY.

2. AT THE TIME THAT THE COMIDEASTFOR DESTROYER, USS TRIPPE, VISITED HODEIDA DURING LATE MAR 75 THE SOVIETS IN AN ATTEMPT TO LESSEN THE IMPACT OF THAT VISIT, QUICKLY ARRANGED FOR A SOVIET MINESWEEPER NORMALLY STATIONED IN ADEN TO VISIT HODEIDA. YAR FOREIGN MINISTER ABDALLAH AL-ASNAG ASSISTED THE US EMBASSY IN COUNTERING THAT SOVIET MANEUVER BY ARRANGING FOR PRES HADMI TO DECREE THAT ALL VISITING WARSHIPS MUST ANCHOR SOME FOUR MILES OFF HODEIDA (THE DRAFT OF THE US SHIP PREVENTED IT FROM COMING IN ANY CLOSER WHEREAS THE SOVIET SHIP COULD HAVE NORMALLY PULLED RIGHT UP TO THE DOCK.)

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3. DURING A FORMAL CALL MADE ON FM AL-ASNAG ON 7 JUNE BY

ADM BIGLEY, AMB SCOTES, AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS, MR ASNAG ADVISED HIS AMERICAN VISITORS THAT THE SOVIETS HAD TRIED TO AGAIN UPSTAGE THE AMERICAN NAVY THROUGH A PLOY SIMILAR TO THAT DESCRIBED ABOVE. THIS TIME THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR, WHO HAS BEEN UNAVAILABLE FOR ANY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE PAST TEN DAYS DUE TO ILL HEALTH, SUDDENLY MATERIALIZED IN HODEIDA ON THE MORNING OF 6 JUNE TO MEET A SOVIET MINESWEEPER THAT SURPRISINGLY APPEARED AT HODEIDA AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT PRES HAMDI WAS SCHEDULED TO BE IN HODEIDA ON 6 JUNE ON PRIVATE BUSINESS. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR DID ARRANGE FOR MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET SHIP TO CALL ON THE PRES IN HODEIDA.

4. FM ASNAG WAS BARELY ABLE TO SUPPRESS HIS MIRTH AT THE ENTIRELY OBVIOUS AND CLUMSY SOVIET ATTEMPT TO ONCE AGAIN UPSTAGE THE US NAVY. HE INFORMED HIS AMERICAN GAUTS THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER OF CUTTING OFF THE LEAK IN HIS GOVERNMENT TO THE SOVIET AMB CONCERNING US NAVY ACTIVITIES IN YAR. IN FACT SUCH A VISIT WOULD HAVE BEEN COMMON KNOWLEDGE BY THE TIME THAT THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR REACTED.

5. ON A MUCH MORE SERIOUS NOTEAL-ASNAG FURTHER COMMENTED THAT AS SOON AS THE SAUDI MILITARY AID PROGRAM FOR YAR WAS EFFECTED YARG WOULD REMOVE THE SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORY PRESENCE ALL TOGETHER.

6. IN BOTH INSTANCES WHERE THE SOVIETS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO OUTMANEUVER THE US NAVY GOODWILL VISITS, THEY HAVE ONLY SUCCEEDED IN FURTHER CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUCCESS OF THOSE VISITS.  
SCOTES

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